

Weekend Report from R8

This Week

Emergency Response – Lakewood, CO Pond - On January 19, 2017, EPA Region 8, along with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, West Metro Fire and Rescue, City of Lakewood, and Lakewood Animal Control responded to a call reporting claims of dead and dying geese coated in a gray substance in and around a small pond located in Lakewood, CO. Samples were collected from the pond and geese, and the surrounding area was closed. On January 26, 2017, additional geese were impacted by the pond, prompting a nearby building owner to contact Congressman Perlmutter's office. Approximately 20 geese have been impacted. EPA is continuing to collaborate with the other Agencies/organizations in determining the nature and source of the substance. EPA Region 8 has also been coordinating with the Office of Land and Emergency Management, the Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance's National Enforcement Investigations Center, and the Office of Congressional and Intergovernmental Relations on this incident. EPA provided Congressman Perlmutter's office a status of the investigation on January 26, 2017.

Final preparation for issuing draft permits for a uranium in-situ recovery project near the Black Hills, SD - The Region 8 Underground Injection Control (UIC) Program anticipates issuing draft Class III and V UIC area permits and a proposed aquifer exemption decision to Powertech (USA) Inc. in the near future for a proposed uranium in-situ recovery (ISR) project northwest of Edgemont, South Dakota. South Dakota does not have primacy for UIC Class III and V. The permits allow for injection into an aquifer for extraction of uranium and deep injection wells for disposal of treated ISR process waste fluids. The proposed project site is near the Black Hills, where several tribal nations have historic claims or consider this area to be sacred. Through consultation with EPA, several tribes have raised concerns about potential impacts on historic properties of cultural importance. There will be a 60-day public comment period on the draft permits and aquifer exemption and public outreach events (including hearings) near the site to allow ample opportunity for tribes and other stakeholders to provide comments. Region 8's Office of Water Protection/UIC and Public Affairs programs have coordinated closely with OW, OGWDW, OITA, OAR, OPA and OGC over the last several months on this project.

Week Ahead

Silver Bow Creek/Butte Area Superfund Site: On Monday, January 30th my staff will close the loop with Senator Daines' office on an inquiry regarding the Berkley Pit, part of the Silver Bow Creek/Butte Area Superfund Site. The Berkley Pit has received increased attention due to an unusual situation this winter where thousands of Snow Geese died after coming in contact with highly acidic water in the Berkley Pit. We have coordinated our response with OCIR.